

Introduced by Senator Escutia

February 23, 2006

An act relating to community colleges.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1563, as introduced, Escutia. Community colleges: Community College Early Assessment Program.

Existing law establishes the California Community Colleges, under the administration of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, as one of the segments of postsecondary education in this state. Existing law establishes community college districts throughout the state, and authorizes those districts to provide instruction to students at community college campuses.

This bill would express legislative findings and declarations relating to, among other things, the rates at which students who enroll in community colleges as freshmen return for a second year of college. The bill would express legislative intent to enact legislation to establish a Community College Early Assessment Program for the purpose of providing high school pupils with an indicator of their readiness for college-level English and mathematics at the end of grade 11 and allowing high schools to work with pupils in grade 12 to elevate the skills of these pupils to a level expected of first-time community college freshman students.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

1 (1) In California and throughout the nation, an increasing
2 number of jobs require some education beyond high school to
3 meet the challenges of a growing, knowledge-based global
4 economy. Of the students who seek a postsecondary education in
5 California, 62 percent attend a community college. Current data
6 show that many of these students do not succeed.

7 (2) Completion rates in the California Community Colleges
8 are some of the lowest in the country. In 2002, only 48 percent of
9 community college freshmen returned for a second year of
10 college, compared to the national average of 55 percent.

11 (3) More than 50 percent of incoming students of the
12 California Community Colleges require remediation or basic
13 skills development in order to complete college level work. This
14 is a critical factor determining student success in achieving
15 educational objectives.

16 (4) A lack of consistent standards, curriculum, and
17 assessments between high schools and community colleges
18 contributes to these problems. It is estimated that there are 495
19 English, mathematics, and English as a Second Language
20 placement examinations across California's 109 community
21 colleges.

22 (b) Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature to enact
23 legislation to establish a Community College Early Assessment
24 Program for the purpose of providing high school pupils with an
25 indicator of their readiness for college-level English and
26 mathematics at the end of grade 11 and allowing high schools to
27 work with pupils in grade 12 to elevate the skills of these pupils
28 to a level expected of first-time community college freshman
29 students.